



# WHY DO WE NEED A GP IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY?

## WHAT CARE DOES THE HAEMOPHILIA TREATMENT CENTRE PROVIDE?

- Specialist focused bleeding disorder clinics
- A monthly Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) clinic consisting of Haemophilia, Rheumatology, Pain Specialist Services, HTC Nurse Consultants, Physiotherapy & Social Work
- A monthly Rheumatology focused clinic
- Musculoskeletal Physiotherapists sessions are available over the five day working week by appointment
- Social Work services continue to be available five days a week

## WHAT ARE SOME TYPICAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY YOUR GP?

- “Diagnosing and treating disease, pain and other conditions
- Vaccinations
- Mental health advice
- Family planning advice
- Wound care
- Prescribing medication
- Writing referrals for tests or scans
- Referring you to specialists.”

*-BetterHealth Channel*



## Alex Coombs from the Alfred answers your questions about GPs & bleeding disorders



### CHANGING ROLE OF THE HTC

Those with long memories will recall the days of your Ronald Sawes Haemophilia Treatment Centre (or HTC) being a “one stop shop” for a variety of health problems. The Alfred HTC one stop shop previously was the place you may have come to request completion of a medical summary for a variety of government or work place application forms. Such documents such as Centrelink medical summaries, including Disability Support (DSP), Unemployed (now known as Jobseeker) temporary sick leave, Disability Parking Permits, Office of Housing Medical Priority Forms were left for your haematologist to complete. Add to this now the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) forms that is becoming common for many.

However, this is no longer sustainable and hasn't been for many years the practice. What has been increasingly obvious is that health issues outside the HTC specialist service will continue for everyone as we all age, through injury or accident at home or in the work place.

We have and will continue to now redirect you to see your General Practitioner (GP) for these purposes and for general health matters.

Over the years your HTC has had to make changes to keep up with the increased number of patients that are registered with the centre. This includes those with varying inherited genetic bleeding disorders and acquired bleeding disorders.

Building a relationship with a local GP who is kept informed about your medical history, is the recommended primary contact point for helping you to apply for and complete the medical documentation required. This will enable the Alfred HTC to focus on the care, coordination, education, and treatment of our patients with a bleeding disorder.

### WHAT CAN THE GP DO FOR ME?

You are always encouraged to contact the HTC for advice, and particularly when you think that it is related to your bleeding disorder. However there are many times your GP should be your first point of contact for non-emergency and preventative medical care. Throughout

***“It is essential that you select a GP who you feel comfortable talking to about the difficult or complex parts of your health.”***

your lifespan you may find routine medical check-ups will benefit you by keeping up to date on your overall health status. GP services are in high demand in certain geographical locals. They are experts in managing your general health. Your chosen GP is encouraged to call the HTC for advice if they have any doubts or questions in regard to your bleeding disorder or they suspect the presenting issue may be related to your bleeding disorder.

“GPs are trained in medicine and are qualified to treat people for general health

***“Over the years, your HTC has had to make changes to keep up with the increased number of patients that are registered with the centre.”***

problems, such as illnesses or injuries that cannot be treated by over-the-counter medication. Some GPs also specialise in particular areas, such as children’s health, mental health or aged care for example.” (Better Health Channel)

It is essential that you select a GP who you feel comfortable talking to about the difficult or complex parts of your health. You may base your choice upon the recommendation from others, the GP’s gender (if you feel that they will be more sympathetic or empa-

thetic towards you), or from your ethnic/cultural/language group. Alternatively you may visit multiple GPs in your local area until have chosen one who you are comfortable with, maybe even one medical centre with several GPs to choose from, till you find the best person to coordinate your overall healthcare. Once you have the name of your preferred GP and their medical centre, please inform us and update the HTC when you move. We can ensure your GP is kept informed with summaries from each clinic or admission you have at the Alfred.

If specialist reports are required for various applications such as DSP, NDIS please ensure the writer details exactly what questions they are require answered. Such a request should be on the agency’s letterhead. Social Work is available to assist you in working out these processes.

These requests can be submitted to the individual team members including the Physiotherapists, Pain, Rheumatology and Psychology. Social Work similarly can provide advocacy and psycho-social support summaries as required.

Requests can be emailed through to haemophilia@alfred.org.au or by fax (03) 9076 3021

***You can also seek information from:***

***The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP), call 1800 472 247 or email racgp@racgp.org.au***

***Useful Link:***

***<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/servicesandsupport/seeing-a-doctor-or-general-practitioner>***